

## Adventure XIII – The Adventure of the Beryl Coronet

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Paul Churchill once quipped he had a hard time studying for Sherlockian quizzes, so inspired by Simon Goodenough's *A Study in Scarlet – A Sherlock Holmes Murder Dossier*, Paul began collecting Canonical artifacts around 1990 to help him remember each story. Over 1,500 artifacts later, Paul's 'Evidence Boxes' became legendary in the Sherlockian world as he displayed them at numerous Scion meetings.

What Paul could not find, he made. He became known as a master forger, and 'created' numerous 'genuine faux' objects, such as letters, documents, and telegrams. Paul was invested in the Baker Street Irregulars in 2006 as "Corot." After Paul's passing, the Evidence Boxes were bequeathed to Watson's Tin Box Scion Society, a Society Paul co-founded in 1989. Debbie Clark has maintained the Boxes and continues the practice of displaying the items from one of the Boxes at each society meeting.

Beth Austin assisted in this effort by photographing, annotating the items, and finding the quotes for many of the items, while Denny Dobry and Rusty Mason supported Paul's efforts by photographing each of the items, as well as developing a comprehensive inventory with notations of item's mentioned in the story. Each of the Boxes is posted with permission of Debbie Clark and Jacquelynn Morris.



'The price of the gold chasing is incalculable.'

'Oh, any key will fit that old bureau.'



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Pictured are stamps Paul Churchill connected closely to the story of the Beryl Coronet.



‘One of the gold corners, with three of the beryls in it, was missing.’

‘He is round in the stable lane now.’



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Pictured are stamps Paul Churchill connected closely to the story of the Beryl Coronet.



'...a corner holding three gems had been torn away.'

'...cabs go slowly through this snow.'

Thus spoke City banker Alexander Holder, to explain why he had preferred to walk from the Underground to 221B Baker Street.



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Pictured are stamps Paul Churchill connected closely to the story of the Beryl Coronet.



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Pictured is the beryl coronet and its carrying case, which was used as collateral for a £50000 loan by Holder's bank.

'He opened the case, and there, embedded in soft, flesh-coloured velvet, lay the magnificent piece of jewellery which he had named.'



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Pictured is the safe deposit box used Alexander Holder to hold the beryl coronet while he was at the office on the day he received the coronet as collateral for a loan. The box was kept in the bank's safe.

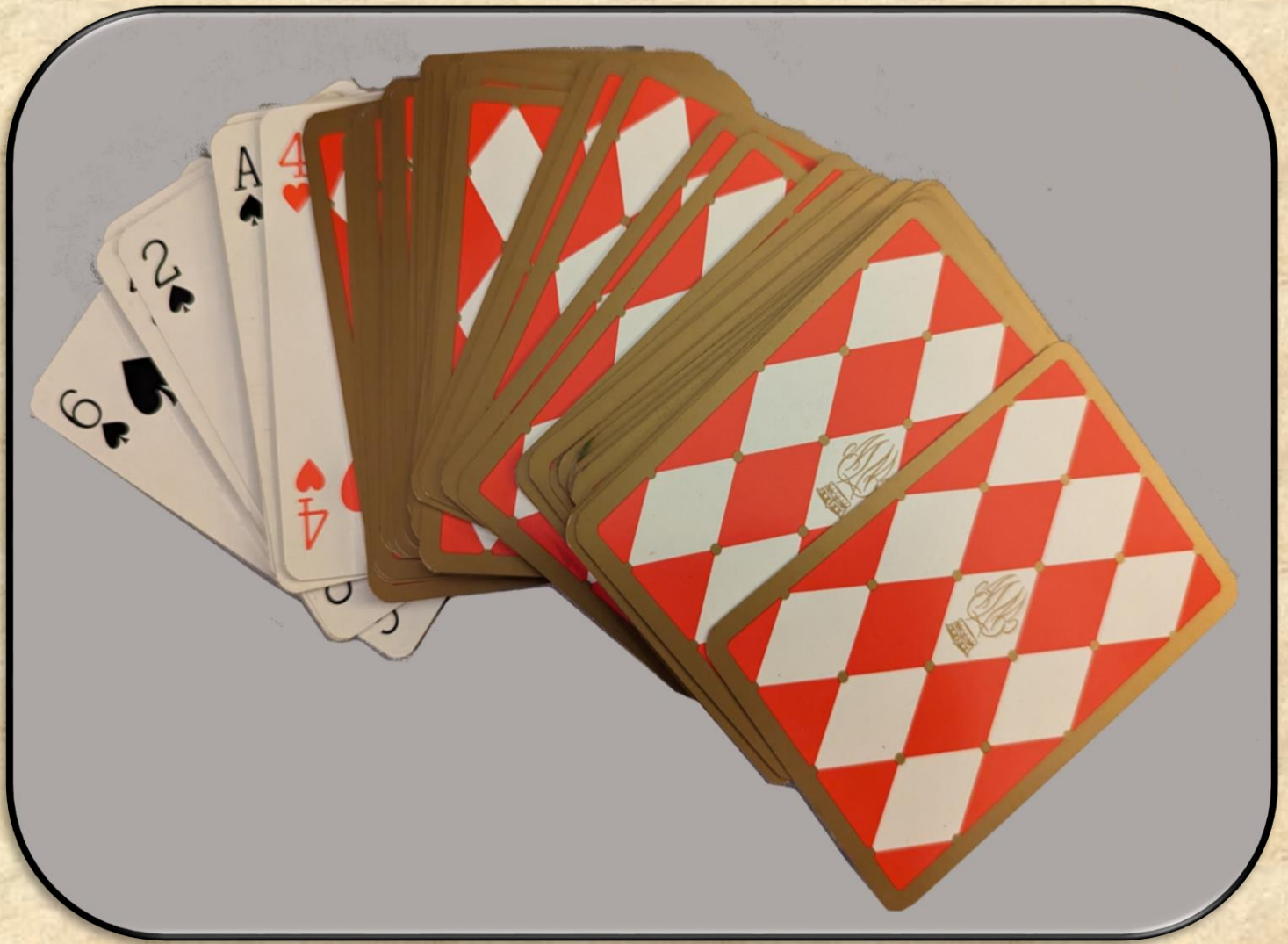
'When evening came, I felt that it would be an imprudence to leave so precious a thing in the office behind me. Bankers' safes had been forced before now, and why should not mine be?'



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Pictured is the beryl coronet brought to the bank by the anonymous loan recipient, but it is thought it was part of the royal family's jewels. Holder loaned £50000 to the requestor, with the coronet as collateral.

'You have doubtless heard of the Beryl Coronet?'



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Pictured is one of the decks of cards by which Arthur Holder lost heavily, requiring him to constantly ask his father for money to pay off his gambling debts.

‘He learned to play heavily at cards and to squander money on the turf, until he had again and again to come to me and implore me to give him an advance upon his allowance, that he might settle his debts of honour.’





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Pictured is the key that unlocked Alexander Holder's bureau at his residence. His son, Arthur, indicated the bureau, could be easily unlocked. Holder stored the coronet in the bureau for protection.

'Oh, any old key will fit that bureau. When I was a youngster I have opened it myself with the key of the box-room cupboard.'



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Pictured is a farthing issued during the Victorian reign. The British farthing was worth a quarter of an old penny (1/960 of a pound sterling).

‘You shall not have a farthing from me,’ I cried, on which he bowed and left the room without another word.



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Pictured is the £1000 note offered by Alexander Holder as a reward for the return of the beryls, stolen from the coronet in his possession.

‘You may go to any expense which you think necessary. I have already offered a reward of a thousand pounds. My God, what shall I do!’



Pictured is the cheque for £4000 drawn by Alexander Holder and paid to Sherlock Holmes to cover the cost of the recovery of the beryls, as well as the reward offered of £1000.

‘That would be unnecessary. Three thousand will cover the matter. And there is a little reward, I fancy. Have you your cheque-book? Here is a pen. Better make it out for four thousand pounds.’

My Dearest Uncle,

I feel that I have brought trouble upon you, and that if I had acted differently this terrible misfortune might never have occurred. I cannot, with this thought in my mind, ever again be happy under your roof, and I feel that I must leave you forever. Do not worry about my future, for that is provided for; and, above all, do not search for me, for it will be fruitless labour and an ill-service to me.

In life or in death, I am ever —

Your loving  
Mary.

Uncle Alexander

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Pictured is the note and envelope Mary left to her uncle, Alexander Holder. She does not confess to being part of the theft of the beryls, but states she has brought trouble to the family.

‘Her bed this morning had not been slept in, her room was empty, and a note lay for me upon the hall table. I had said to her last night, in sorrow and not in anger, that if she had married my boy all might have been well with him.’



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Pictured is a beryl coronet pin, a replica of the coronet used as collateral for the large loan issued by Holder's Bank. Holder may have given the pin to Holmes as a thank you for recovering the stolen beryls.

'Sir, I cannot find words to thank you. But you shall not find me ungrateful for what you have done. Your skill has indeed exceeded all that I have ever heard of it.'



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Pictured is one of Burnwell's shoes, with his initials on top. Holmes purchased the shoes from Burnwell's valet to determine if the shoes fit the tracks outside Holder's residence.

'I went in the shape of a loafer to Sir George's house, managed to pick up an acquaintance with his valet... and finally, at the expense of six shillings, made all sure by buying a pair of his cast-off shoes.'



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Pictured is the life preserver Sir George Burnwell tried to threaten Holmes with. Holmes had approached Burnwell to recover the stolen beryls. A life preserver was a short club with a heavily weighted end, used as a weapon

‘But when I gave him every particular that had occurred, he tried to bluster, and took down a life-preserver from the wall.’



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Additional items of interest  
in “The Adventure of the  
Beryl Coronet” not included  
in the original Evidence  
Box.



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Pictured are the gaiters, or spats, worn by Alexander Holder when visiting Holmes concerning the stolen beryls. Gaiters are protective clothing for a person's ankles and legs below the knees.

He was dressed in a sombre yet rich style, in black frock-coat, shining hat, neat brown gaiters, and well-cut pearl-grey trousers.



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Pictured is the bureau at Alexander Holder's residence. Holder chose to store the beryl coronet in the bureau, locked by a key, in lieu of leaving it at the bank.

'I did not breathe freely until I had taken it upstairs, and locked it in the bureau of my dressing-room.'



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Pictured is the pound notes paid out by Holder & Stevenson Bank to the noble borrower. The beryl coronet was placed in collateral for the funds.

‘Seeing that my client was anxious to leave, I said no more; but, calling for my cashier, I ordered him to pay over fifty thousand-pound notes.’



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Pictured is the gas lamp on the wall of Alexander Holder's dressing room. Holder had left it turned on during the night the beryls were stolen.

'The gas was half up, as I had left it, and my unhappy boy, dressed only in his shirt and trousers, was standing beside the light, holding the coronet in his hands.'

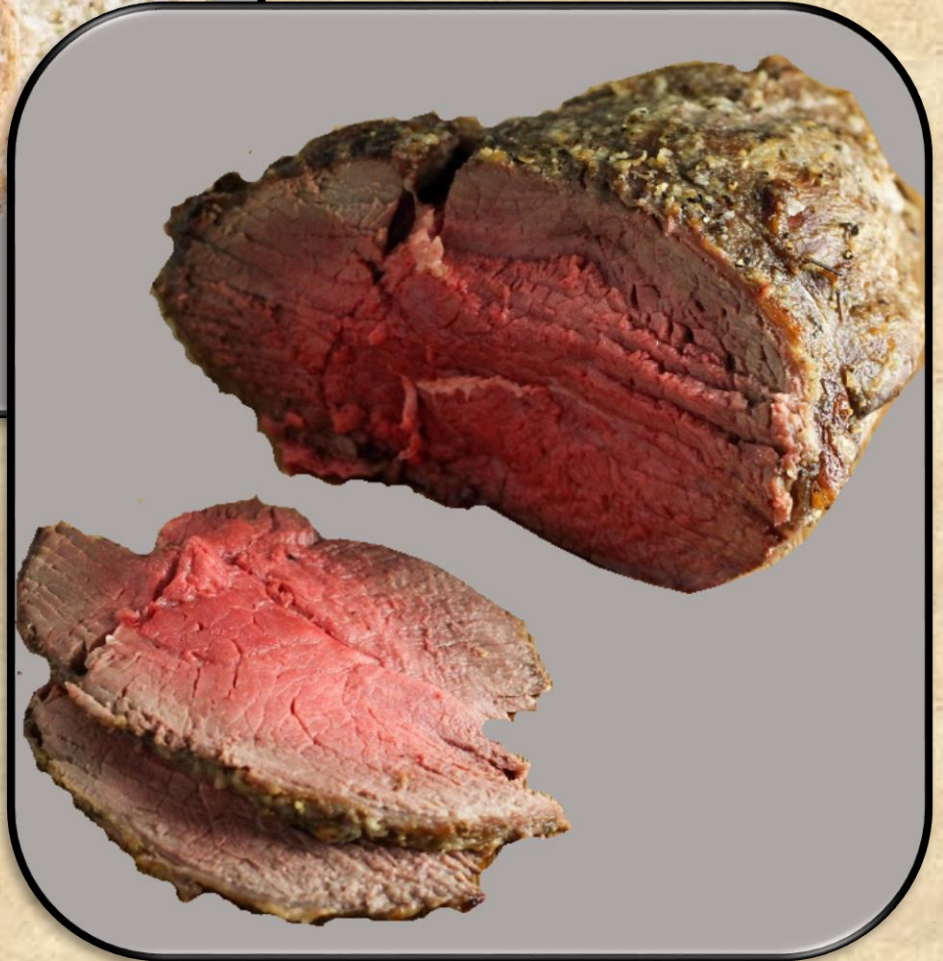
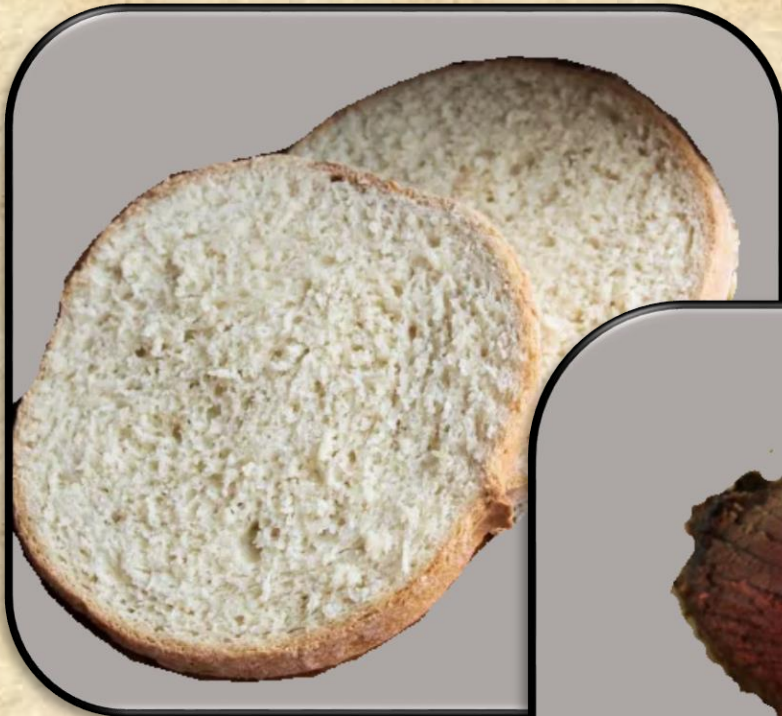


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Pictured is the wooden leg worn by Francis Prosper, the green grocer, who delivered vegetables to the Holder's residence, and was seeing the waiting maid, Lucy Paar.

'Oh, yes; he is the greengrocer who brings our vegetables round. His name is Francis Prosper.'

'And he is a man with a wooden leg?'



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Pictured is the bread and roast beef Holmes found on the sideboard and made a quick sandwich before going out to recover the stolen beryls.

He cut a slice of beef from the joint upon the sideboard, sandwiched it between two rounds of bread, and, thrusting this rude meal into his pocket, he started off upon his expedition.



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Pictured are the six shillings Holmes paid to Sir George Burnwell's valet for Burnwell's discarded shoes, which Holmes could use to match prints outside Holder's residence.

'...managed to pick up an acquaintance with his valet, learned that his master had cut his head the night before, and finally, at the expense of six shillings, made all sure by buying a pair of his cast-off shoes.'